

## ABSTRACT

A graphic user interface (GUI) and method for providing a computer operating environment utilizes a set of universal tools so that an intuitive computer environment. A tool in this universal tool set is a display-and-control graphic element that manages other graphic elements, including other display-and-control graphic elements. The display-and-control graphic elements can be used to create other graphic elements, which are displayed on the display-and-control graphic elements. However, these created graphic elements exist on a global drawing surface. Thus, the graphic elements can interact with any other graphic element, including graphic elements on the global drawing surface, on other display-and-control graphic elements and/or on the same display-and-control graphic element. Another tool in the universal tool set is an information display-and-control graphic element. These graphic elements can be used to modify the appearance or a functionality of an associated graphic element, as well as other operations.